

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-3. (Cancelled).

4. (Currently Amended) A system, comprising:

system memory;

one or more processors; and

one or more physical, recordable-type computer-readable media having stored ~~there one~~ thereon computer-executable instructions of a controlling authority for identifying an authenticating authority for authenticating a principal for access to network resources, the controlling authority comprising:

a receiving module configured to receive a request for an authenticating authority resolution from an authenticating authority that is not authorized to authenticate the principal, wherein the request comprises an account ID of a principal to be authenticated, the account ID including an individual identifier and a domain identifier;

an identity catalog, the identity catalog configured to access an assignment mapping that maps each account ID in a plurality of account IDs to a corresponding plurality of authenticating authorities that are authorized to authenticate the account ID, the account ID including an individual identifier and a domain identifier, the account ID being used to identify comprising the identity of the principal at least one account ID of at least one principal to an identifier of a corresponding authenticating authority; and

an authority resolution module for accessing the identity catalog to locate within the mapping an identity of an assigned authenticating authority from among the one or more authenticating authorities that corresponds to the individual identifier and domain identifier in the account ID of the principal to be authenticated match the account ID based on the identity of the principal with a corresponding authenticating authority and for causing an authentication request to be directed to the corresponding authenticating authority.

5. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 4, further comprising a network interface for passing the account ID to the authority resolution module and for receiving from the authority resolution module an authentication request directed to the corresponding authenticating authority.

6. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 4, wherein the identity catalog maps a plurality of account IDs to a corresponding plurality of authenticating authorities.

7. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 6, wherein each account ID comprises a namespace identifier, and wherein the plurality of account IDs comprises at least two account IDs having a common namespace identifier, wherein the at least two account IDs are mapped to at least two different respective ones of the plurality of authenticating authorities.

8. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 6, wherein each account ID comprises a namespace identifier, and wherein the plurality of account IDs comprises at least two account IDs having different namespace identifiers, wherein the at least two account IDs are mapped to the same one of the plurality of authenticating authorities.

9. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 6, wherein the content of the identity catalog is based at least in part on the organizational affiliation of principals within an entity.

10. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 6, wherein the content of the identity catalog is based at least in part on the geographical location of principals.

11. (Currently Amended) At a super authority connected to a network environment, an assigned authenticating authority and one or more other authenticating authorities also being connected to the network environment, each authenticating authority configured to authenticate of subset of principals that access the network environment through different domains, a method of controlling authentication of principals for access to network resources in a network environment, wherein the principal's account identifier is configured for authentication at an authenticating authority from among the assigned authenticating authority and the one or more other authenticating authorities, the method comprising:

receiving at the super authority a request for an authenticating authority resolution from ~~one of a plurality of~~ an authenticating authorities authority that is not authorized to authenticate the principal, wherein the request comprises an account ID of a principal to be authenticated, the account ID including an individual identifier and a domain identifier;

accessing an assignment mapping that maps each account ID in a plurality of account IDs to a corresponding plurality of authenticating authorities that are authorized ~~can be used~~ to authenticate the account ID, the account ID including an individual identifier and a domain identifier, the account ID being used to identify comprising the identity of the principal;

locating within the mapping an identity of an assigned authenticating authority from among the one or more authenticating authorities that corresponds to the individual identifier and domain identifier in the account ID of the principal to be authenticated; and

causing an authentication request to be transmitted to the assigned authenticating authority located from among the one or more authenticating authorities, the assigned authenticating authority having been located using the principal's individual identifier and domain identifiers in the principal's account ID, wherein the request asks the assigned authenticating authority to authenticate the principal.

12. (Original) The method according to claim 11, wherein each account ID comprises a namespace identifier, and wherein the plurality of account IDs comprises at least two account IDs having a common namespace identifier, wherein the at least two account IDs

are mapped to at least two different respective ones of the plurality of authenticating authorities via the assignment mapping.

13. (Original) The method according to claim 11, wherein each account ID comprises a namespace identifier, and wherein the plurality of account IDs comprises at least two account IDs having different namespace identifiers, wherein the at least two account IDs are mapped to the same one of the plurality of authenticating authorities via the assignment mapping.

14. (Original) The method according to claim 11, further comprising altering the assignment mapping whereby an account ID previously mapped to a first authenticating authority is remapped to a second authenticating authority.

15. (Original) The method according to claim 11, wherein the assignment mapping is based at least in part on the organizational affiliation of principals within an entity.

16. (Original) The method according to claim 11, wherein the assignment mapping is based at least in part on the geographical location of principals.

17. (Currently Amended) At a super authority connected to a network environment, an assigned authenticating authority and one or more other authenticating authorities also being connected to the network environment, each authenticating authority configured to authenticate of subset of principals that access the network environment through different domains, an apparatus for controlling authentication of principals for access to network resources in a network environment, wherein the principal's account identifier is configured for authentication at an authenticating authority from among the assigned authenticating authority and the one or more other authenticating authorities, the ~~method~~ apparatus comprising:

means for receiving at the super authority a request for an authenticating authority resolution from ~~one of a plurality of~~ an authenticating authorities authority that is not authorized to authenticate the principal, wherein the request comprises an account ID of a principal to be authenticated, the account ID including an individual identifier and a domain identifier;

means for accessing an assignment mapping that maps each account ID in a plurality of account IDs to a corresponding plurality of authenticating authorities that are authorized ~~can be used~~ to authenticate the account ID, the account ID including an individual identifier and a domain identifier, the account ID being used to identify comprising the identity of the principal;

means for locating within the mapping an identity of an assigned authenticating authority from among the one or more authenticating authorities that corresponds to the individual identifier and domain identifier in the account ID of the principal to be authenticated; and

means for causing an authentication request to be transmitted to the assigned authenticating authority located from among the one or more authenticating authorities, the assigned authenticating authority having been located using the principal's individual identifier and domain identifiers in the principal's account ID, wherein the request asks the assigned authenticating authority to authenticate the principal.

18. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 17, wherein each account ID comprises a namespace identifier, and wherein the plurality of account IDs comprises at least

two account IDs having a common namespace identifier, wherein the at least two account IDs are mapped to at least two different respective ones of the plurality of authenticating authorities via the assignment mapping.

19. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 17, wherein each account ID comprises a namespace identifier, and wherein the plurality of account IDs comprises at least two account IDs having different namespace identifiers, wherein the at least two account IDs are mapped to the same one of the plurality of authenticating authorities via the assignment mapping.

20. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 17, further comprising means for altering the assignment mapping whereby an account ID previously mapped to a first authenticating authority is remapped to a second authenticating authority.

21. (Currently Amended) At a super authority connected to a network environment, an assigned authenticating authority and one or more other authenticating authorities also being connected to the network environment, each authenticating authority configured to authenticate of subset of principals that access the network environment through different domains, a physical, recordable-type computer-readable medium having thereon computer-executable instructions for performing a method of controlling authentication of principals for access to network resources in a network environment, wherein the principal's account identifier is configured for authentication at an authenticating authority from among the assigned authenticating authority and the one or more other authenticating authorities, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving at the super authority a request for an authenticating authority resolution ~~from one of a plurality of an authenticating authorities~~ authority that is not authorized to authenticate the principal, wherein the request comprises an account ID of a principal to be authenticated, the account ID including an individual identifier and a domain identifier;

accessing an assignment mapping that maps each account ID in a plurality of account IDs to a corresponding plurality of authenticating authorities that are authorized ~~can be used~~ to authenticate the account ID, the account ID including an individual identifier and a domain identifier, the account ID being used to identify comprising the identity of the principal;

locating within the mapping an identity of an assigned authenticating authority from among the one or more authenticating authorities that corresponds to the individual identifier and domain identifier in the account ID of the principal to be authenticated; and

causing an authentication request to be transmitted to the assigned authenticating authority located from among the one or more authenticating authorities, the assigned authenticating authority having been located using the principal's individual identifier and domain identifiers in the principal's account ID, wherein the request asks the assigned authenticating authority to authenticate the principal.

22. (Currently Amended) The physical, recordable-type computer-readable medium according to claim 21, wherein each account ID comprises a namespace identifier, and wherein the plurality of account IDs comprises at least two account IDs having a common namespace identifier, wherein the at least two account IDs are mapped to at least two different respective ones of the plurality of authenticating authorities via the assignment mapping.

23. (Currently Amended) The physical, recordable-type computer-readable medium according to claim 21, wherein each account ID comprises a namespace identifier, and wherein the plurality of account IDs comprises at least two account IDs having different namespace identifiers, wherein the at least two account IDs are mapped to the same one of the plurality of authenticating authorities via the assignment mapping.

24. (Currently Amended) The physical, recordable-type computer-readable medium according to claim 21, wherein the assignment mapping is based at least in part on the organizational affiliation of principals within an entity.

25. (Currently Amended) The physical, recordable-type computer-readable medium according to claim 21, wherein the assignment mapping is based at least in part on the geographical location of principals.